

REPORT

NATIVE PAPERS

ON

FOR THE
Week ending the 29th May 1897.

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LIST OF NEWSPAPERS.

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
BENGALI.		CALCUTTA.			
Weekly.					
1	"Bangavasi"	Calcutta	20,000	22nd May, 1897.	
2	"Basumati"	Ditto ... ..	.....	19th April and 27th May 1897.	
3	"Hitaishi"	Ditto	800	25th May 1897.	
4	"Hitavadi"	Ditto	About 4,00	21st ditto.	
5	"Mihir-o-Sudhakar"	Ditto	1,250	22nd ditto.	
6	"Sahachar"	Ditto	About 500	19th ditto.	
7	"Samay"	Ditto	3,000	21st ditto.	
8	"Sanjivani"	Ditto	3,000	22nd ditto.	
9	"Som Prakash"	Ditto	800	24th ditto.	
10	"Sulabh Samachar"	Ditto ... ..	.....	22nd ditto.	
11	"Vikrampur"	Ditto	200	21st ditto.	
Daily.					
1	"Banga Vidya Prakashika"	Ditto	300	21st, 22nd and 25th to 28th ditto.	
2	"Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika."	Ditto	1,000	23rd to 27th ditto.	
3	"Samvad Prabhakar"	Ditto	1,132	22nd, and 25th to 28th ditto.	
4	"Samvad Purnachandrodaya"	Ditto	200	20th, to 22nd and 24th, 25th and 27th ditto.	
5	"Sulabh Dainik"	Ditto	Read by 3,000	21st, 22nd and 25th to 27th ditto.	
HINDI.		CALCUTTA.			
Weekly.					
1	"Bharat Mitra"	Calcutta	2,000	20th ditto.	
2	"Hindi Bangavasi"	Ditto	10,000	24th ditto.	
PERSIAN.					
Weekly.					
1	"Hublul Mateen"	Ditto	500	24th ditto.	
URDU.		CALCUTTA.			
Weekly.					
1	"Darussaltanat and Urdu Guide."	Calcutta	310	20th ditto.	
2	"General and Gauhariyasi"	Ditto	330	24th ditto.	

No.	Names of Newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
	BENGALI.	BURDWAN DIVISION.			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
	"Ulubaria Darpan" ...	Ulubaria ...	550		
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Bankura Darpan" ...	Bankura ...	500	23rd May, 1897.	
2	"Burdwan Sanjivani" ...	Burdwan ...	250	18th ditto.	
3	"Chinsura Vartavaha" ...	Chinsura ...	620	23rd ditto.	
4	"Education Gazette" ...	Hooghly ...	1,280	21st ditto.	
	BENGALI.	PRESIDENCY DIVISION.			
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Murshidabad Hitaishi" ...	Murshidabad ...	696	19th ditto.	
2	"Murshidabad Pratinidhi" ...	Berhampore ...	300	.....	This paper is neither regularly published nor regularly issued.
3	"Pratihar" ...	Ditto ...	603	21st ditto.	
	URIYA.	ORISSA DIVISION.			
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Sambalpur Hitaishini" ...	Bamra in the Central Provinces.	.....		This paper is said to have some circulation in the Division, but the number of subscribers could not be ascertained.
2	"Samvad Vahika" ...	Balasore ...	190		
3	"Uriya and Navasamvad" ...	Ditto ...	309		
4	"Utkal Dipika" ...	Cuttack ...	480		
	HINDI.	PATNA DIVISION.			
	<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Bihar Bandhu" ...	Bankipur ...	About 600		
	<i>Bi-weekly.</i>				
1	"Aryavarta" ...	Dinapur ...	1,000	19th and 22nd ditto.	
	URDU.				
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Akhbar-i-Al Punch" ...	Bankipur ...	500		
2	"Gaya Punch" ...	Gaya ...	400	17th ditto.	
	BENGALI.	BHAGALPUR DIVISION.			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Gaur Varta" ...	Malda ...	.....	25th ditto.	
	BENGALI.	RAJSHAHY DIVISION.			
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Hindu Ranjika" ...	Boalia, Rajshahi ...	243	19th ditto.	This paper is not regularly published for want of type.
2	"Rangpur Dikprakash" ...	Kakina, Rangpur ...	180		
	HINDI.				
	<i>Monthly.</i>				
1	"Darjeeling Mission ke Masik Samachar Patrika."	Darjeeling ...	700		
	BENGALI.	DACCA DIVISION.			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Faridpur Hitaishini" ...	Faridpur ...	.....	Chaitra, 1803 B.S. and 27th April and 13th May, 1897.	
2	"Kasipur Nivasi" ...	Kasipur, Barisal ...	315	12th May, 1897.	

No.	Names of newspapers.	Place of publication.	Reported number of subscribers.	Dates of papers received and examined for the week.	REMARKS.
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Barisal Hitaishi" ...	Barisal ...	.....	14th May, 1897.	
2	"Charu Mihir" ...	Mymensingh ...	900	17th ditto.	
3	"Dacca Prakash" ...	Dacca ...	2,400	23rd ditto.	
4	"Sanjay" ...	Faridpur ...	.....	21st ditto.	
5	"Saraswat Patra" ...	Dacca ...	About 500	22nd ditto.	
	ENGLISH AND BENGALI.				
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Dacca Gazette" ...	Dacca ...	500	24th ditto.	
	BENGALI.	CHITTAGONG DIVISION.			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Tripura Prakash" ..	Comilla ...	900		
	<i>Weekly.</i>				
1	"Sansodhini" ...	Chittagong ...	120	21st ditto.	
	BENGALI.	ASSAM.			
	<i>Fortnightly.</i>				
1	"Paridarshak-o-Srihattavasi"	Sylhet ...	.....	
2	"Silchar" ...	Silchar, Cachar ...	.....	15th ditto.	

I.—FOREIGN POLITICS.

THE *Hitavadi* of the 21st May writes as follows:—

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

Treatment of Indians in Natal. Whether it be the ill-luck of the Indians or an indication of England's own coming decline, many Englishmen are now found to be extremely mean-minded and selfish. It is by the acquisition of her Indian empire that England has attained her present renown and prosperity, and it is much to be regretted that the natives of that empire should be ill-treated in all her colonies. It is to the treatment of Indians in Natal, however, that we wish particularly to refer in this place.

We have received a copy of a petition to the Colonial Secretary by the English colonists of Natal, a perusal of which will convince everybody, whose judgment is not warped by selfishness, that Indians are being cruelly oppressed in that colony. Englishmen who rebelled because they could not obtain equal rights with the Boers in the Transvaal are now depriving Indians of their most just rights in their own colony. The English Minister in Natal has openly declared that Indians are to be "hewers of wood and drawers of water," and that they must not form part of the South African nation which is going to be built up." Could anything be more hateful or disgraceful than such sentiments?

What would the English Government say if Indians were to do in Natal as Englishmen did in the Transvaal? What will other nations think of the English if they treat Indians so badly in a colony which draws her supplies of labourers from India, and which is indebted to it in so many other ways? If the English have any sense of shame, and if they have any wish to avoid the charge of ingratitude, they should not allow Indians to be treated so badly in Natal.

2. According to the Turkish Press, says the *Hublul Mateen* of the 24th May, when war broke out between Russia and

HUBLUL MATEEN,
May 24th, 1897.

England's attitude in the Græco-Turkish war

Turkey, England readily embraced that golden opportunity to harass her dreaded and inveterate enemy, Russia, and openly told the Sultan that she would help him in the quarrel. But when the Sultan actually demanded of England her promised help, she declined to send it, except on the condition that a portion of the Turkish Empire must be ceded to her. In spite of all this, however, Turkey has never shown any sign of hostility towards England, whom she has ever considered as her friend. England, however, looks upon Turkey as her inveterate enemy, and has always tried to bring about the dismemberment of the Turkish Empire. The English Press is foully abusing the Sultan, and the disturbances in Turkey, Armenia and Crete are largely ascribable to England's unfriendly attitude towards the Sultan. England, however, did not succeed in her attempt to ruin the Sultan. The other European Powers saw through her design. Having thus failed in her attempt, she set poor Greece against Turkey, assuring the former of her support and the co-operation of the other Powers. This attempt, too, has failed. It is talked about in the official circle at Constantinople, that after the overthrow of the Greeks, the victorious Turkish army will turn their attention to Cyprus and Egypt. Egypt is anxiously awaiting the arrival of the Turks to release her from foreign yoke.

II.—HOME ADMINISTRATION.

(a)—Police.

3. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* of the 21st May thus writes from Damukdia Ghât:—

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

Cow-slaughter at Damukdia ghât.

On the 13th May last, the local *khalasis* brought an ox on the flat and proclaimed that it would be publicly killed. This announcement excited all the Hindu residents of the place and not a few Musalmans. In the meantime, one Gokul Krishna Rai, identified the ox as his, upon which the Police Sub-Inspector placed the animal under police custody and instructed Gokul to institute proceedings. But, for some unaccountable cause, the Railway Police had a large number of armed policemen brought to the place by wiring to different stations, and the District Superintendent of Police, Nadia, himself arrived there. It became known the

next morning that the *khalasis* had procured another cow for the purpose of slaughter, and it was rumoured that some European or Eurasian on the flat or at the Station had given it to them out of spite against the Hindus. On coming to know of this, the District Superintendent ordered that the cow must not be slaughtered publicly on the flat, but it might be privately killed at the slaughter-house in the interior of the Station. The animal was accordingly sent to the slaughter-house. The greatest cordiality has always existed between the *khalasis* and the local Hindus, and this sudden change of attitude on the part of the former gives rise to the suspicion that somebody is secretly instigating them. It is rather curious that the District Superintendent has replaced the Hindu sentries at the local Plague hospital by Musalman sentries, and replaced the four Hindu constables at the Ghat by four Musalman constables. It is now rumoured that the *khalasis* will soon slaughter a cow within sight of the Hindus, and with the help of Musalman policemen.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

4. The same paper publishes a letter from a correspondent describing the act of oppression that was attempted by the crew of the Steamer *Eagle*, and requests the Sub-divisional Officer of Habiganj to personally enquire into the matter.

SANSODHINI,
May 21st, 1897.

5. The *Sansodhini* of the 21st May observes that Mr. Castle, the District Superintendent of Police, Chittagong, is quite unfit for the post he holds. He has been entrusted with the duty of preserving the peace, but he himself breaks the peace, as has been proved in a recent case. The Government will do well to remove him from the Police Service.

MIHIR-O-SUDHAKAR.
May 22nd, 1897.

6. A correspondent writes in the *Mihir-o-Sudhakar* of the 22nd May, that the Hindu residents of Kushtia, in the Nadia district, ill-treated Oli Miah Saheb of that place in various ways. They prevented all shop-keepers from selling their goods to him, and barbers and washermen from serving him. The Hindu pleaders resolved not to conduct his cases, except on the payment of a high fee, and this caused him great loss and inconvenience. The leaders in this anti-Musalman movement were Babu Chandi Charan Chatterji, Naib, Naldanga Raj Estate, and Babus Durgadas Banerji and Haris Chandra Rai, leading members of the Local Bar.

As for Oli Miah Saheb, it is not true that he ordered seventy-five cows to be slaughtered, because the *goalas* refused to sell him *dadhi*. Oli Miah is not the man to offend the whole Hindu community out of spite against a few among them. It is the Hindus who ill-treated the whole Musalman community, out of spite against Oli Miah Saheb.

BANGAVASI,
May 22nd, 1897

7. Sir John Lambert, observes the *Bangavasi* of the 22nd May, has long been in the Police Service, and his name has been closely associated with the Calcutta Police. He introduced many new features into the Department, which was so long in his hands. He was the first to appoint natives to high posts in the Police Service. He created the Detective Department. He was an intelligent, spirited and hard-working Police Officer. He kept the Calcutta *gundas* in check, and Calcutta enjoyed peace and security during his time. He was a friend of the natives, and they are sorry to part with him.

BANGAVASI.

8. The same paper refers to the Taluka riot case in the Bhagalpur district, in which the men of Mr. Grant, a zamindar and indigo-planter in Bhagalpur were, along with others, charged with rioting. One of Mr. Grant's employes has written a letter in the *Englishman* defending his master's conduct, and saying that the *raiya*s were ill treated and burnt out of house and home, not because they refused to sow indigo for Mr. Grant, but because they could not, or did not, pay their rent, for which a decree was made against them. "I am sure," continues that gentleman, "every right-minded person will agree with me that I acted perfectly right in demolishing their houses and sowing indigo and other crops on the sites." Now, where is the law that justifies a person in demolishing the house of a judgment-debtor and sowing indigo on its site, if he refuses or fails to satisfy the claim of the judgment-creditor? Where is the law that justifies such a man in making a defaulting debtor homeless and in insulting his wife and daughters? An Englishman, it is well known, belongs to

the ruling race and is above law. It is well known that the Indian must toil and moil for the benefit of his rulers, but it was not known that an Englishman has also the right to drive an Indian out of his home, demolish his house and sow indigo on the site.

The attempted attack on female chastity on board a steamer.

9. The same paper publishes two letters describing the occurrence related in paragraph 10 of this report.

BANGAVASI,
May 22nd, 1897.

10. A correspondent writes, as follows, in the *Sanjivani* of the 22nd May:—

SANJIVANI,
May 22nd, 1897.

Attempted attack on a lady on board a steamer.

“On the 24th April last, a gentleman of Jalsuka, in the Sylhet district, was a passenger on board the steamer *Eagle*, with his sister and brother-in-law. The lady was accommodated with a seat behind a screen, her relatives taking their seats close by. The lady drew the attention of the Doctor Babu and the *serang*, and they were soon found bent upon committing a mischief. At dead of night a *khalasi* was found removing the screen, with a view to enter the enclosure behind. He was caught by the lady's relatives, who raised a hue and cry which drew a crowd. A passenger, Babu Ananda Chandra Rai, second clerk in the Habiganj Magistrate's Office, complained to the *serang* against the *khalasi*, but both the *serang* and the Doctor Babu declined to entertain the complaint. Ananda Babu soon learnt from another passenger that the crew had resolved to drown him, and violate the lady's chastity. This led him to be on his guard, and he and his friends sought shelter with two constables on board, who now put on their uniforms and frustrated the attempts of the *serang* and his comrades to carry out their threat. At 2 o'clock the steamer reached the Madua station where Ananda Babu, the lady and her relatives, prepared to alight. The crew, however, tried their best to prevent their landing, but with the help of the constables, the station-master and the Doctor Babu of the cooly depôt, they succeeded in escaping from the hands of the crew, the lady fainting soon after leaving the steamer.

The Steamer Company and the Assam Government should make a strict inquiry into the truth or otherwise of these statements, and bring the offenders to justice.”

11. Sir John Lambert, observes the *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 25th May, was an intelligent, skilful and experienced Police Officer. As a mark of its approbation

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 25th, 1897.

Sir John Lambert.

of his splendid services, the Government made him a C.I.E. and also conferred the Knighthood on him. Sir John befriended his Bengali subordinates in various ways. He made many of them Inspectors, and some of them Superintendents. He was a perfect gentleman, and was on intimate terms with the native aristocracy. He was a faithful friend and a kind patron. He was very much attached to his subordinates, and created a fund for the defence of police officers prosecuted in a Law Court. Sir John invariably took the side of the police in quarrels between the police and the public. This sometimes led to police oppression, and the case of the Printer of the *Hindoo Patriot*, during the Editorship of the late Kristo Das Pal, and the case of the Ghosals of Potaldanga, are instances in point. On the whole, however, Sir John Lambert was a good man, and it gives the writer pleasure to see the Calcutta public doing him honour on the eve of his departure.

(b)—Working of the Courts.

12. The *Faridpur Hitaishini* for Chaitra, 1303 B.S., and Baisakh, 1304 B.S.,

Babu Kaliprasanna Sarkar, Deputy Magistrate of Faridpur.

draws the attention of the Lieutenant-Governor to the fact that Babu Kaliprasanna Sarkar, Deputy Magistrate of Faridpur, has purchased a press with his own money, and is conducting it at Faridpur in the name of relatives. He has also set up a newspaper, the *Sanjay*, with the view of depriving this paper of the fees which it receives by publishing advertisements of intended sales by the local Civil Courts. With the view of maintaining a newspaper in the district, the late district Judge, Mr. Posford, determined to publish all such advertisements in a single local paper. But the Deputy Magistrate has now secured for the *Sanjay* half of those advertisements. Other misdoings of the Deputy Magistrate will be gradually told.

FARIDPUR
HITAISHINI,
Chaitra, 1303 B.S.,
and Baisakh, 1304
B.S.

The writer also complains that Babu Kaliprasanna Sarkar has acquired much immovable property in the district, and has contracted loans from its residents. The writer learns from a trustworthy source that he is still indebted to residents of the district. In order to evade the law, the Deputy Magistrate contracts loans in the name of dependants, and puts his signature in acknowledgment of the loans. The writer prays that a commission may be appointed to enquire into the matter.

BARISAL HITAISHI,
May 14th, 1897.

13. The *Barisal Hitaishi* of the 14th May has the following in English :—
Exemption of legal practitioners from liability to serve as Jurors or Assessors. Sir Alexander Mackenzie is signalising his career as a Provincial Governor by promulgating Rules and Regulations which make his administration unique in the annals of British rule in Bengal, Bihar and Orissa. Even taking the most optimist view of every measure in connection with his rule, the most casual observer cannot fail to notice that some of his Honour's acts give clear indication of a strong will to govern this Province in an arbitrary and despotic manner, without consulting the happiness of the governed or the greatest weal of the bulk of the people. His Honour's recent measure in connection with wholly cancelling licenses for fire-arms in Backergunge, and His Honour's Notification exempting legal practitioners of all grades and classes from liability to serve as Jurors or Assessors, have rendered his administration more unpopular than that of Sir Charles Elliott.

The Jury Notification of Sir Charles Elliott, which led to serious complaints in every quarter of the Province, and gave rise to a very hot and unpleasant discussion in the Bengal Press, was not so obnoxious as the Notification recently published in the *Calcutta Gazette* exempting legal practitioners from serving as Jurors or Assessors. The Notification published in the *Gazette* means exemption from liability to serve as Jurors or Assessors, but in point of fact it is an exclusion from the rights and privileges so long enjoyed by lawyers, one of the most highly educated and enlightened sections of the people of our country, of taking some part in the Criminal administration of their country.

Without consulting the Sessions Judges of the several districts of the Province, His Honour has inaugurated a policy which will bring about the most disastrous results in the Criminal administration of the country. Hitherto legal practitioners, serving as Jurors or Assessors, gave material help to Sessions Judges in arriving at a correct conclusion of facts in Sessions cases. The best of Sessions Judges courted the services of legal practitioners as Jurors or Assessors, as it was admitted that possessing a knowledge of law and having had experience of the country, they were the best persons to give the best assistance to Sessions Judges in Sessions trials. It is nearly thirty-five years since Act XXV of 1861 came into force. And it is during this long period that legal practitioners served as Jurors or Assessors throughout the Province. There are numerous instances of great culprits being brought to condign punishment, and innocent men being saved from the hands of a hangman by the independent attitude which marked legal practitioners while acting as Jurors or Assessors. We have every reason to believe that, although the Notification publishes a rule of exemption from such service, there underlies a policy of excluding the whole class from the right of serving as Jurors or Assessors. It is quite apparent from the fact that Magistrates of districts, while preparing a list of Jurors or Assessors, have already struck off the name of legal practitioners of all classes, without at all consulting them. Englishmen who are already old and experienced Sessions Judges and are marked by true instinct and genuine feelings of a John Bull will always deplore the introduction of such retrograde movement which will no doubt soil the fountain of criminal justice. A deputation of the members of the Rajshahi Bar waited upon Mr. Staley, Sessions Judge of that district, expressing their willingness to serve as Jurors or Assessors. In reply to that body, Mr. Staley expressed his opinion that, if legal practitioners be exempted from such service, there was no need of introducing the system of Jury trial in Rajshahi, as it will do no good to the people or to the administration of criminal justice. We are sorry we are not in possession of the exact words of Mr. Staley, but we only give the purport of what he said. It is urged, in justification of this measure, that in England the legal practitioners are all exempted from such service. The analogy is unhappy and quite inapplicable to the case of India. In England the number of men of good education and

true enlightenment, is far greater than what we have here. Being men of a free country and a free nation most people have far better ideas of local self-government and of the security of the life and liberty of the people. Being in the centre of free institutions, the majority of the people have independent views of fact and matters in connection with criminal justice. Is that the state of things in Bengal or India? The descendants of those who wrested the Magna Charta from the King at Runnymede have naturally a more healthy idea of the constitutional powers and privileges of a people, and a more correct notion of justice. Hence a comparison of things in England and India is anomalous.

Babu Gyan Chandra Pal, in re-submitting, under orders of the District Magistrate, Backergunge, a list of Assessors, made the following remarks:—

“The assessors list is re-submitted. I have put 510 names of the collecting members of the Panchayat. The names of a large number of muktears, pleaders, and such people have been excluded. Some Noma Sudras, Shahas, Poddars, and Jugis have been put in. More names of Musalmans have been included. The number is 813 against 412 in the year 1896. Some of the Panchayats, whose names have been put in, are men of the cultivating class and illiterate.

GYAN CHANDRA PAL,

Deputy Collector.

The 24th April 1897.

The District Magistrate, Mr. B. Bell, observes—Approved. If a man is fit to be Panchayat, he is fit to be Assessor.

B. BELL.

The 26th April 1897.

So, it appears that the policy of Government, as it appears from the method resorted to by its Officers, is to bring in illiterate people, no better than boors, to sit as Judges of cases in which questions of life and liberty of our people are involved. Bengal is said to be the most enlightened of all provinces in India. People here are more peaceful than in any other part of India. It is here that our Rulers have chosen to give such rules a full operation in the first instance. The work of emasculation, once commenced by a Christian Ruler, will be completed by such over-zealous Officers as Mr. B. Bell is. It is much to be deplored that an Englishman and a graduate of the Oxford University did not feel the least hesitation to entertain such opinions as are embodied in his remarks above. We would like to see his countrymen, when committing any offence in India, to be tried by men of that stamp whom he has been attempting to bring in the fore-front to serve on the Bench of a Jury or Assessors. We understand the members of the Barisal Bar have come to a resolution not to avail themselves of the privileges of being exempted from serving as assessors.

14. The *Sahachar* of the 19th May writes as follows:—

The Jury Notification.

The employment of lawyers on Juries greatly facilitates a satisfactory administration of justice.

SAHACHAR,
May 19th, 1897.

Indeed, lawyers are the fittest persons to serve as jurors. Their exemption from liability to serve as jurors must, therefore, prove prejudicial to the administration of justice. We will not say that none but lawyers are fit to serve as jurors, and that the order, exempting them from liability to serve as jurors, will virtually lead to an abolition of the Jury system. But it is certain that, without lawyers, jury trial will not work satisfactorily, and lose much of its present popularity. Sir Alexander Mackenzie is a true well-wisher of Bengal and almost all his acts are prompted by noble motives. But his motive in passing the order in question is not at all clear to us, and duty compels us to say that he has, in this matter, fallen into a mistake.

We humbly request Government to withdraw the Jury Notification in deference to the public feeling.

15. The *Hitavadi* of the 21st May says:—The Magisterial Officers are armed with unlimited powers in this country, and

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

The Subdivisional Officer, Bihar. any abuse of those powers, therefore, proves grievously oppressive to the people. That is why we always try to remedy

oppressions by Magisterial Officers, Native or European. We now request the Lieutenant-Governor to condignly punish Babu Mahendranath Gupta, Sub-divisional officer, Bihar, who is certainly guilty of great oppression, if the statements made in the petition to Government by Babu Mathuranath Dhar be true.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

16. The same paper heartily thanks Justices Ghosh and Wilkins for recommending that measures should be adopted to ensure the safety of female honour on Railways, and the Lieutenant-Governor for hearing the writer's prayer for a re-trial of Collins and Lawson.

SANSODHINI,
May 21st, 1897.

17. The *Sansodhini*, of the 21st May, thanks Mr. Finnimore, the Joint-Magistrate of Chittagong, for his impartial decision of cases. He makes no distinction between a native and a European. He has fined Mr. Castle, the District Police Superintendent of Chittagong, for assaulting the groom of a Deputy Magistrate. The integrity of British justice has thus been maintained.

SANJIVANI,
May 22nd, 1897.

18. The *Sanjivani*, of the 22nd May, thanks the Lieutenant-Governor for instructing the Deputy Legal Remembrancer to move the Calcutta High Court against the decision of the Subdivisional Officer of Ranaghat in the Railway outrage case. In consequence of this motion, the High Court has enhanced the sentence on Lawson. This decision has been hailed with satisfaction by the Indian public, and it is to be hoped that Mr. De will now feel the moral weakness he showed in his decision of the case, and will, in future, give proof of moral courage.

The Government should compel the Railway authorities to act up to the advice of the learned Judges, that there should be some device in every moving train, by means of which a passenger in danger may communicate with the Guard.

BANGAVASI,
May 22nd, 1897.

19. The *Bangavasi* of the 22nd May gives the history of the Chakdighi Will case, lately decided by the Privy Council, to show the uncertainty of English Law and the ruinous effects of litigation in an English Law Court. Testamentary disposal of property is not permitted or recognised in the Hindu Sastras. It is a purely English innovation. It is often had recourse to in order to deprive people of their rightful inheritance; but even this it does not always succeed in effecting. The Chakdighi case was first tried in 1875 in Burdwan, when the widow of the testator pleaded that the Will was not genuine, and that she was the rightful inheritress of all the property of her deceased husband. The case, however, was decided against her. In 1888 the testator's widow died, and one year after Babu Chhakkan Lal Rai, the testator's nearest living *sapinda*, filed a suit, claiming to be the rightful heir, and praying for probate of the Will. The case was tried in Hooghly, and decided against the plaintiff and in favour of Babu Lalit Mohan Rai, another claimant of the property. An appeal against this decision was filed in the Calcutta High Court, which decided the case in favour of the petitioner. Against this, Babu Lalit Mohan Rai appealed to the Privy Council, which has upset the decision of the Calcutta High Court. The Privy Council's decision is somewhat strange. It overrides the claim of Babu Chhakkan Lal to the testator's property, but at the same time declines to define Lalit Babu's right in it. The decision is beautifully vague and indecisive. And this is the result arrived at after a waste of lakhs. Is this justice or a denial of justice?

BANGAVASI.

20. Referring to the Calcutta High Court's decision in the Ranaghat Railway case, the same paper observes that the accused were very lightly punished, but it would have nevertheless been much more desirable to show forbearance to a haughty, hot-blooded young lad of seventeen, who possesses no sense of right and wrong and is more of a beast than of a man. What has been done cannot be undone, and the people as well as the Government should henceforth be more careful. But what is the good of cruelly treating an untrained and inexperienced youth, and thereby driving him into a full-fledged fiend? Will this severe treatment benefit the injured women in

any way? Punish by all means, but why wreak your vengeance? If you cannot make a god, why create a fiend?

21. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 24th May thus comments on

Mr. Dé in the Ranaghat Railway case.

Mr. Dé's decision in the Ranaghat Railway case:—

Mr. Kiran Chandra Dé, Joint-Magistrate of Ranaghat, no doubt did very great injustice in the case, but he did so not without a reason. *Dhuti* and *chadar* are, as a rule, more severely punished than coat and trousers, and Europeans and Eurasians, accused of heinous crimes, are oftener than not leniently punished. In many cases they are not punished at all. The Anglo-Indian community raise a hue and cry when European or Eurasian offenders are adequately punished. Witness the Rajabala case, in which there was a travesty of justice in the lower Court. In the High Court, on revision, the integrity of justice was maintained. The High Court's decision, however, offended the Anglo-Indian community, and the Anglo-Indian Press raised a hue and cry over it. Miscarriages of justice in Railway cases have been very frequent of late, and it will not do to hold Mr. Dé singly responsible in the matter. Everybody seeks his own interests, and Mr. Dé, a young man, has done what men much older than him are doing and would have done under similar circumstances. The Anglo-Indian community have raised a hue and cry over the lenient punishment passed by the Subdivisional Officer of Nilphamari upon a man charged with an attempt to derail a moving train. They, however, remained provokingly silent over the miscarriage of justice in the Ranaghat case. If, however, an attempt had been made by two natives to violate the chastity of a European lady, the Anglo-Indian community would have simply gone mad over a lenient punishment. What is offence in the case of a native is equally an offence in the cases of an Anglo-Indian, but in the eye of the Anglo-Indian community there is a good deal of difference between an offence committed by a native and an offence committed by a European! Suppose Mr. Dé to have had Anglo-Indian anger and fury in his mind when he forbore to pass a heavy sentence on the accused in the case under notice, and you will not find much to blame in his conduct.

In the case under notice, Collins had decamped. The very same thing happened in the Rajabala case, and the offender at large was never traced and acquitted. Collins, too, will not most probably be arrested. One fails to understand how a European can evade detection in a country where there is only a handful of Europeans.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 24th, 1897.

(c)—Jails.

22. The *Chinsura Vartavaha* of the 23rd May prays the Government to

Releasing the Editor of the *Hitavadi* as a Jubilee act.

release the Editor of the *Hitavadi* from Jail on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee.

CHINSURA
VARTAVAHA,
May 23rd, 1897.

(d)—Education.

23. Dr. Martin, observes the *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 25th

Age of school-boys.

May, seems to be very much particular about the age of school boys. He has observed that, hence-

forth the age of a school-boy should be written in the transfer certificate, both in figures and in words. It is his impression that, in their applications for admission to the Entrance examination, school-boys are in the habit of understating their age. But what harm is there even if such a practice really exists? Age is no disqualification in the getting of a scholarship, as it used to be before. Age comes into question only at the time of admission into Government service, when a separate age certificate may be required to guard against lowering of age.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 25th, 1897.

(e)—Local Self-Government and Municipal Administration.

24. The *Hitavadi* of the 21st May publishes the following reports of

Reports of water scarcity.

water scarcity:—

Ketugram—Burdwan.—Great scarcity of water. The tanks all silted up. The villagers too poor to re-excavate them.

Tenre—Hooghly.—The Ara tank, which is situated near the Puri road, and by the side of which the great poet of Bengal, Kavikankan, was inspired

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

to write his famous poem, is silting up. If re-excavated, it will serve as a memorial of a great poet, and at the same time supply Puri pilgrims with water. The Hooghly District Board and the Parishad Sabha of Calcutta should attend to the matter.

SANJAY,
May 21st, 1897.

25. The *Sanjay* of the 21st May wants to know what action the Jessore District Board has taken on its representation to the effect that severe water scarcity prevails at Lahuria within the Lohagara thana.

SANSODHINI,
May 21st, 1897.

Water scarcity in a village in Jessore.

26. The *Sansodhini* of the 21st May complains of utter mismanagement in the Chittagong hospital. Although the hospital staff has been doubled, still cholera patients are left unattended, helpless and uncared for. The *mehtar*, the compounder and the nurse may, in turn, attend cholera patients. The appointment of a nurse has relieved the compounder to a large extent, and he can devote much of his time to the nursing of patients. At any rate, an additional *mehtar* may be appointed for this purpose. An eyewitness complains of the utter indifference and carelessness of the hospital staff in the treatment of cholera patients. This state of things should not be tolerated any longer.

BANKURA DARPAN,
May 23rd, 1897.

27. The *Bankura Darpan* of the 23rd May complains of the prevalence of water scarcity in Dhului in the Bankura district. All the tanks are dry. The District Board's well is in a foul condition, and it will be of no service to the people if it is not repaired. The state of things is no better in the adjoining villages.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 23rd, 1897.

28. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika*, of the 23rd May, does not approve of the resolution of the Bhagalpur public to build a burning *ghât* in memory of Sir Alexander's visit to that town and call it the Mackenzie Ghât. People are in the habit of using the names of burning *ghâts* for the purpose of imprecation. Telling a man to go to Kasi Mitra's *ghât*, for instance, means wishing him death. It is not certainly desirable that, by associating the Lieutenant-Governor's name with a burning *ghât*, the Bhagalpur public should make it a by-word and an imprecation.

(f)—Questions affecting the land.

MURSHIDABAD HITAI-
SHI,
May 19th, 1897.

29. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi*, of the 19th May, complains that a local zamindar, who is a resident of another district, adopted a very hateful means of realising rent. A tahsildar and two or three *halsanas* were sent with his raiyats when the latter went to the Collectorate to receive *takavi* loans, and as soon as they came out, the money they had received was taken away from them. The Collector should ascertain who this zamindar is.

(g)—Railways and communications, including canals and irrigation.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

30. A correspondent of the *Hitavadi* of the 21st May says that the guardians of female railway passengers have, under present arrangements, to sit at a distance from their ladies, a circumstance which often produces mischief. This difficulty can be removed by the construction of composite carriages, with four or five compartments, of which the three in the middle should be reserved for females and the two at the extremities for their guardians.

SAMAY,
May 21st, 1897.

31. The *Samay* of the 21st May complains that there is no waiting-room for female passengers at the Tarkeswar Railway Station. This causes great inconvenience to the female passengers who are often obliged to sit in the same room with male passengers, or to huddle together in a corner of the platform. It is to be hoped that the Railway authorities will take steps to remove this inconvenience.

The practice of issuing tickets throughout the day, lately introduced at the Sealdah Railway Station, though otherwise a very convenient arrangement, has become a source of perplexity to ignorant people. They buy tickets and generally get into any train which they find waiting near the platform. This

often leads them to travel by a wrong train. The best way of removing this inconvenience will be to check the tickets of passengers before a train starts.

32. The *Banguvasi*, of the 22nd May, complains that there is no road from Jaynagar, a village in the 24-Parganas district, to the Mugra hat station on the Diamond Harbour line of the Eastern Bengal State Railway. There is a narrow *khal*, which runs dry in the summer and admits only a *dinghi*. The 24-Parganas District Board should construct a road at least as a relief measure.

BANGAVASI,
May 22nd, 1897.

(h)—General.

33. The *Samay* of the 21st May is glad that Mr. Cotton, the new Chief Commissioner of Assam, has already become immensely popular. He is trying his best to ameliorate the condition of the Assam people and is even patronising the Native Press in that Province, the Native Press, that is, which is an eyesore to Anglo-Indian officials.

SAMAY,
May 21st, 1897.

34. The *Banguvasi* of the 22nd May is surprised to learn that one year's punkha-pulling charges for the European Garrison in Fort William amount to thirty-three thousand rupees. The writer would like to know how many lakhs of rupees are spent in punkha-pulling for the whole European Army in India. It is a matter for congratulation that the Native Army does not enjoy the luxury of punkha pulling. This makes a large saving and teaches the native soldiers patience and endurance, and endurance is a soldierly virtue. Is there no record to show how many lakhs of rupees were spent on punkha-pulling for the Indian army during the Musalman rule?

BANGAVASI,
May 22nd, 1897.

III—LEGISLATIVE.

35. The *Charu Mihir* of the 17th May writes as follows:—

The Government of India has written an astonishing letter to the Bengal Government proposing restrictions on the right of appeal in Civil suits. The Supreme Government should not, without grave reasons, deprive the people of a right, which they have been enjoying for nearly half-a-century, or interfere with systems to which they have been accustomed.

CHARU MIHIR,
May 17th, 1897.

It is no use comparing the percentages of appeals in England and India, without explaining the cause of the difference. The ratio of suits to the population is far greater in England than in India, and love of litigation is not therefore the cause of the larger percentage of appeals in this country. The true cause of the larger percentage is that people here have not so much confidence in the lower Courts as they have in England. There can be no comparison between the lower Courts of the two countries. The lower Courts in England are presided over by lawyers of great knowledge and experience, and the press give no small help there to the judicial administration. In India the Press has little influence over the judicial officers, and the large number of cases in which the decisions of those officers are reversed by the upper Courts, shows what their judicial capacity is.

36. The *Hitavadi* of the 21st May cannot accept the conclusion of the Government of India that the unrestricted right of appeal enjoyed by the Indians is the sole cause of the large number of appeals in this country. The Supreme Government says that the percentage of appeals is larger in India than in England; but this proves nothing if the constitution and procedure of the Courts of the two countries are dissimilar. So far as the writer is aware, the procedure of the Courts of the two countries widely differs. Cases relating to marriage, as well as suits for compensation, for instance, are tried in England by jury.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

The real point at issue is not whether the number of appeals is large, but whether appeals are proved by their results to be unnecessary. The writer is of opinion that, far from being unnecessary, appeals are a great safeguard against miscarriage of justice in this country. The procedure of the Indian Courts is most unsatisfactory. Government now insists upon despatch in the

decision of suits, and many judicial officers are therefore found to be anxious to secure despatch, in disregard of all moral scruples. A former Munsif of Serampore (now a Subordinate Judge) had, for instance, with a view of securing despatch, hit upon a curious method of striking cases off his file. Few suitors stood on that side of his Court which fronted the river, but the Munsif's *chaprasi* invariably called out the names of parties from that side, and the result was that many cases were struck off because few heard the call. This Munsif also used to record the evidence of witnesses imperfectly, in order to prevent an upsetting of his decisions on appeal. Many cases have been referred to in this paper to illustrate the confusion and irregularity that reign in the Small Cause Courts of this country. The writer will add here one more instance. When Babu Mahendra Nath Mitra was Judge of the Sealdah Small Cause Court, a false claim for 1,000 rupees was instituted by one Gayapati Hajra against a native lady of the Tamluk chauki. The claim was decreed *ex parte* on the strength of certain books produced by the plaintiff. The lady's prayer for a re-trial was rejected. These books were, however, shortly after in the Sessions Court at Midnapore, proved to have been forged books, and Gayapati was sentenced to seven years' imprisonment. Did not the decision of the Small Cause Court in this case amount to a miscarriage of justice? That people have little confidence in the Small Cause Courts is proved by the fact that since suits of a value between 1,000 and 2,000 rupees were made cognisable by the High Court as well as by the Calcutta Small Cause Court, many such suits have been tried in the High Court, in spite of the heavier cost of conducting suits in that Court.

The Native Judicial Officers are indeed all competent men, but the fear of a higher Court once gone, they will not do their work so satisfactorily as at present.

The Supreme Government proposes to abolish the Letters Patent system of appeal to the High Court. But Government has no right to abolish that system, and it is mistaken if it thinks that system of appeal useless. Many who have been defeated in all the lower Courts have gained their cause by this form of appeal. Mahendra Chandra Ganguli of Alipore is an example.

Government should also remember that a reduction of the number of appeals will lead to a fall of its income from the Law Courts.

SANJIVANI,
May 22nd, 1897.

37. The *Sanjivani* of the 22nd May makes the following objections to the

The Religious Endowments Bill. Religious Endowments Bill:—

1. The Mover of the Bill has not provided different arrangements for the management of the different kinds of religious endowments. He ought to have taken into consideration the fact that Hindu endowments cannot be properly managed by Musalmans, Musalman endowments by Sikhs, and Brahmo endowments by Christians. Mr. Charlu has taken into consideration only the rank and position of the people to be elected managers of religious endowments, and also the property possessed by them. He ought to have paid equal attention to their religious beliefs and prejudices.

2. In the next place, the Mover has nothing to say in his Bill as regards the keeping of accounts, the responsibilities of the trustee and his punishment if any part of the property is stolen, wasted or misused. The Bill does not also define the relation between the Government and the District Committees.

3. In the third place, the Bill does not define the qualification of the trustee as regards his age and social *status*, his character and ability. The ancient scriptures of all ages and all nations agree, that the trustee of a religious endowment should be a man free from all earthly desires, whose mind is the seat of all virtues and whose passions are all at rest. It is a great defect of the Bill that it is silent on this most important point in the management of religious endowments.

It is to be hoped, however, that Mr. Charlu will remove these defects from his Bill.

DACCA PRAKASH,
May 23rd, 1897.

38. The *Dacca Prakash*, of the 23rd May, writes as follows with reference to the proposed restriction of the right of appeal in Civil cases:—

The chief object of the Government in giving the people increased facilities for litigation, is the creation of disunion among them. It has also minor objects in view in promoting litigation in the country, which, briefly stated, are as follows:— (1) compelling the Indians to learn English; (2) the appointment of

European Judges and Magistrates on a large scale, and the giving of employment to European Barristers; (3) the sale of Court-fee stamps on a large scale, and the making of a large revenue from that source. It is not known whether the proposal to restrict the right of appeal in Civil causes has been made really with the view of removing the evil complained of by us. If the Government is really inclined to remove the evil, it should listen to what we have to say upon the subject, and should not be guided solely by its English experience. The inexperience of the Government has often led it to pass laws which have served to promote litigation instead of discouraging it, as intended by the legislators. The Bengal Tenancy Act is an instance in point. It was passed with the object of reducing the chance of litigation to a minimum, but it has, as a matter of fact, served to increase litigation by widening the field of dispute and making the collection of rent a matter of great difficulty. The Bengal Administration Reports show that the number of rent suits is ever on the increase, and that administration of justice has been made a costly affair.

The Government should do nothing in a hurry, and it should think twice before restricting the right of appeal in Civil suits. Injustice is frequently done in the Small Cause Courts because there is no appeal against their decisions, and the Judges of those Courts act without any check or control. Not that injustice is not done in the Appellate Courts, but the proposal under notice may not bring about the desired result, if it is not modified in the light of public opinion.

V.—PROSPECTS OF THE CROPS AND CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE.

39. The *Basumati*, of the 29th April, complains of the prevalence of Scarcity in a village in the district in Koarpur, a village in the Faridpur district. The raiyats are in a pitiable condition, and many are going without a full meal every day.

BASUMATI,
April 29th, 1897.

40. The *Kasipur Nivasi*, of the 12th May, complains that a Musalman woman, being driven to desperation by distress, committed suicide at Karsa Dâknam Chota in the Barisal district. The authorities should take speedy steps to make inquiry into this case.

KASIPUR NIVASI,
May 12th, 1897.

41. The *Charu Mihir* of the 17th May writes:—

Proposed conversion of the Relief Fund into a Loan Fund.

We do not know whether Government will accept Mr. Bourdillon's proposal to grant relief in the shape of loans and not in that of alms. If that proposal is accepted, few will receive loans who have not the means of repaying them, and thus a large number of people will die of starvation.

CHARU MIHIR,
May 17th, 1897.

Mr. Bourdillon says that alms have the bad effect of making those who receive them incapable of self-help. But did not Government and its officials think of this evil effect, before it called for donations for relief purposes? Again, the granting of loans instead of alms will also have a very bad effect. Many donors suspected that another Famine Fund would be created with their donations, and called to mind the fate of the former Famine Fund. If the donations be now applied to the creation of a new Famine Fund, it will be difficult to raise relief subscriptions in any future famine. Subscriptions have been collected this time from the whole world, and if the whole world becomes suspicious, the solar and stellar systems will be the only places from which aid may be expected to come in future.

42. The same paper publishes the following reports of scarcity:—

Reports of scarcity.

Debpur, Tangail.—The condition of the poor people of Deppur, Solla and other places, is becoming worse. Many are obtaining meals at intervals of two or three days and are falling ill. No relief has yet been granted in these villages by the Tangail Sub-Committee.

CHARU MIHIR.

Achamita.—Paddy selling at 10 seers per rupee and rice at 5 rupees and 4 annas per maund; and not available in sufficient quantities even at those prices. A rumour being afloat that a new ruling has been made under which a decree-holder cannot obtain possession of a holding, unless the judgment-debtor surrenders it of his own accord, money-lenders are refusing to lend

money to *jotdars*. The Subdivisional Officer of Kisorganj is requested to grant prompt relief.

Berabuchina.—A member of the local "Bandhu Samiti," having brought 125 distressed people to the Subdivisional Officer of Tangail, the latter observed that the fund at his disposal would not enable him to relieve so many, and requested the member to select from the number such as urgently needed relief. How sorry those starving people must have felt to hear of a selection! The Subdivisional Officer should have previously made an enquiry into their condition.

Gujabari.—Forty-seven out of the 50 families in the village are in distress. The condition of Biru Akanda, Michhu Akanda and Amar Sarkar, are very pitiable.

Bholardiyar.—Of the 30 or 35 families in the village, more than half are in distress. Babulla Takir, Pona Mudi, Sher Ali Shaikh, Sahar, Mahar, Ahad, Taki, Taripulla, Rahim Mudi and Durga Mali are in great distress, with the members of their families. On entering Malipara and Rajanathpur, the correspondent found many houses without thatches. Almost half the number of villagers suffering from hunger. The condition of Baul, Gouaria, Nayebulla, Bajus, Kazi, Anu Aran, Jalu, Tarip, Rahim, Sames and Bazari of Malipara, that of Mahar, Seku, Achhalat, Nayebulla, Nuri, Sansi Shaikh, Mahar Mandal and Baidya Majhi of Rajanathpur and that of Anar, Kanu, Miyan, Siran, Jamal, Bisa, Tanu, Kamu, Abdul Munshi and Ahad Akanda of Raghunathpur are very pitiable. They will die if they do not get prompt relief. A large number of people come every day to the correspondent for relief, but he can do nothing for them beyond holding out hopes of aid.

Nagarbari.—There is famine in the village. The people have no longer any property to sell or pawn. They are, therefore, either starving or living on half-rations, or on herbs. The condition of Char Gara, Dakatia, Daulatpur, Sadabari, Puthia, Kadamtali, Narandia, Malati, Gharia, Tarabari, Char Nagarbari, Palima, Poshna, Tatihar, Naga and other villages is very bad. It is heart-rending to hear the wail of women and children. The Lauhajanga is the only source of water-supply in these parts and it has dried up. There is thus scarcity of water in addition to scarcity of food.

BURDWAN SANJIVANI,
May 18th, 1897.

43. The *Burdwan Sanjivani* of the 18th May complains that acute distress prevails in Goalundo in the Faridpur district.

Distress in Bengal.

People are living on wild roots and plants and dying of bowel complaints. The same is the state of things in many places in the Manbhum district. It is a pity that the authorities are still indifferent and are taking no steps to relieve the distress. Foreigners are contributing towards relieving the distress of the Indian people, and it will be a great pity if people are allowed to die of starvation.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
May 19th, 1897.

44. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 19th May says that middle class people are faring worse in the present scarcity than

Relief of middle-class people.

labourers, and yet nobody is taking any steps to help them. These people may be greatly benefited by a supply of rice at a cheaper rate than the market price. The authorities are requested to make arrangements to that effect.

SANJAY,
May 21st, 1897.

45. The *Sanjay* of the 21st May has heard that *takavi* loans will no longer be granted in the Faridpur district. The stopping

Distress in Faridpur.

of these loans, however, will fill cultivators with despair. The Lieutenant-Governor is not probably aware that severe distress prevails in Faridpur. If he had known this, the loans would not, in all probability, have been stopped. The District Magistrate is requested to apply for fresh orders for the granting of loans.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

46. The *Hitavadi* of the 21st May has received from a Deoghur correspondent the following letter containing certain allegations against Maulvi Nejabet Hossain, and requests the Maulvi to contradict such of them as

Distress in the Deoghur Sub-division.

may be false:—

Here is a report of the condition of the Rohini, Tior, Punasi, Sarima, Balhoti, Lakharia and Sarat Estates within the Deoghur Subdivision, as I witnessed it. Wherever I went, I heard wails for food. Taking me, from my clean clothes, to be one that might afford them some help, many distressed men

and women fell at my feet crying for food. I have found, by careful enquiry, that many people have died of starvation in those Estates. Panchu Dom of Kaluria, Devi Bahatwan of Pipra, the grandmother of Musa Panr of Rohini, Badia Ksharin of Basumatia, are on the point of death from starvation. Some respectable men, too, are in a similar predicament, but they do not like that their names should be published.

The Charge Superintendent, Maulvi Nejabat Hossain, is not willing to admit the existence of famine. He has ordered every applicant for relief, without regard to caste, to dig. To him to whom he is exceedingly kind he grants an allowance of not more than a *poa* of rice. If anybody asks for relief for his family, he asks him to produce them before him, without considering how women of respectable families should appear before him. On the day I visited Sarat, the Deputy Magistrate too visited that Estate. He too passed similar orders. Indeed, the officials require every applicant for relief, without any distinction of sex or rank, to dig. Everybody, however, cannot dig. One day 200 distressed people came to the Maulvi at noon for relief. He dismissed them with doles of a *chitak* of *sotta* per head. At Pior, rice is selling at six seers per rupee.

47. The same paper publishes the following reports of food and water scarcity:—

Reports of food and water scarcity.

Ichhapur, Burdwan. No stock of paddy in the village. Rice selling at 5 Rs. per maund. Many poor people are starving for want of employment. Many will die if relief is not promptly given. The kind hearted Joint-Magistrate of Raniganj, who refuses to admit the existence of distress within the Subdivision, is requested to visit the village. There is also great scarcity of water. The villagers, numbering about 3,000, have to fetch water from a distance of a mile.

Nawapara, Jessore.—The villages of Shirazkati, Binkara, Sarkhola, Naukardanga, Chalisira, Bagdaha, Kota, Payra, Somaspur, Barandi, Ghoradair and Nawapara, within the Manirampur thana of the Jessore district, suffering greatly from scarcity of food and water. Many middle-class people either living on half-rations or starving outright. Many women starving with their infants. No one here in a position to help others.

Rayganj, Dinajpur.—Rainfall for two or three days has slightly improved the prospects of the crops. But distress has begun to be felt in the village. The number of beggars is daily increasing. Coarse rice is selling at 8 seers, and fine rice at 6 seers per rupee.

48. The *Sanjivani* of the 22nd May strongly objects to Mr. Bourdillon's proposal regarding the utilisation of the Famine Charitable Relief Fund. It is a pity that the proposal has been approved by the majority of the

Mr. Bourdillon's proposal regarding the Famine Fund.

members of the Bengal Provincial Relief Committee, those native members who wish to curry favour with the Government having made no objection to it. If the proposal is allowed to be carried into effect, the Government will become responsible for the violation of one of the conditions on which subscriptions to the Famine Fund were invited. The proposal clearly militates against the fourth clause of the Government Notification, and poor *rayats*, entirely ruined by the distress, will not be in a position to receive much help from the fund in the matter of their agricultural operations, and there will, therefore, be a repetition of the famine.

9. The same paper complains of the prevalence of distress in the Sonthal Parganas district. The writer saw unmistakable proofs of distress in and around Deoghur town. It is a pity that the Government has not

Distress in the Sonthal Parganas district.

yet declared the Sonthal Parganas as an affected area. The fact, however, is that hundreds of people are on the verge of starvation, and bear close resemblance to the skeletons in Central India, of which pictures were published in the *Statesman* not long ago. These people will die if they are not relieved very soon. It is to be borne in mind, moreover, that the figures which one comes across in Deoghur are of men who have some strength still left—strength at least to enable them to travel on foot the whole distance from their native villages to the town. It will not be unreasonable to think that there are many like them left at home, who are too weak to come to town in search of work or

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alms. The system of land-tenure in force in the district does not allow raiyats to mortgage their lands. They are not turbulent enough to *loot* rice *golas*, and are too illiterate to ventilate their grievances in the public press. They will die quite helpless if the Government does not come to their help. Some relief is being distributed from the Famine Charitable Relief Fund, but it is miserably inadequate. Is not the Government, on its part, violating its pledge by not opening relief works, and not giving to the starving people the bare necessities of life? Test-works should be opened in the district without any further delay, and wages should be paid to relief labourers on a more liberal scale. The soil being hilly, it will take two or three men a whole day to cut one hundred cubic feet of earth. It will be a cruel joke to pay three men no more than two annas per day. Famine-stricken people are not also likely to bear the fatigue of the hard labour required of them.

Deaths from starvation are taking place. A few days ago a man died on his way home from the relief house. On the 10th May last a boy died near the Deoghur Charitable Dispensary, evidently from the effects of starvation. On the 16th May two starving people fainted near the house of the Manager of the Rohini Estate, and were brought back to life after careful nursing. It is quite possible that many starving people are dying in the distant villages. A few days ago about five hundred starving people assembled in the compound of the local charitable dispensary. About thirty *per cent.* of these people are most likely to die if not soon relieved. These people are no better than living skeletons.

The number of beggars has increased. They frequent the streets and piteously cry for food. They greedily drink even the gruel which is thrown away. Many are too weak to eat solid food. Mothers are deserting their children. One such was found a few days ago near the compound of the local dispensary. An orphanage should be opened here, along with relief work.

It is a pity that the prevailing distress in the Sonthal Parganas was not so long brought to the notice of the kind-hearted Lieutenant-Governor. The writer sent a telegram to the Lieutenant-Governor on the 12th May last, and His Honour has taken prompt measures on receipt of it. Babu Ramananda Chatterji, Principal, Kayastha Pathshala, writes to the *Sanjivani* corroborating the facts stated above.

50. Correspondents of the same paper complain of prevailing distress in Bengal:—

Distress in Bengal.

BOGRA.—Acute distress prevails in Simla in the

Bogra district, but the authorities are quite indifferent. The people named below are in great distress:—

Imam Bux.—Family of seven. Occasionally starving.

Shaikh Dubu.—Family of seven. Earning members two, daily earning four annas. Living on wild roots and plants.

Mianjan Shaikha.—Family of four, very poor. Living on roots and plants. Earns very little.

Baul Shaikha.—Family of seven. Living on wild roots and plants.

Most people are in an equally miserable condition in this place.

JESSORE.—Distress still prevails in Satrinjitpur in the Magura Subdivision of the Jessore district. The following people are in great distress in this locality.

(1) Bhagaban Chandra Chakravarti, of Kurasi, aged seventy; family of seven.

(2) Tarini Charan Sen of the same village diseased and infirm. Family of fourteen or fifteen, Bidhumukhi Sen:—a widow with two children, widow of Taramohan Sen—in great distress; Pitambur Samaddar—Family of six or seven—Occasionally starving.

Besides these, there are about a hundred families in great distress in the adjoining villages. Of these, Basanta Kumar Bannerji and Prasanna Kumar Bannerji of Dasrata and Rajkumar Samaddar, Dayamayi Devi and Bama Sundari Devi of Baghia, are in an extremely pitiable condition.

TANGAIL.—The distress has not yet abated in the least. The local Famine Fund amounts only to Rs. 2,722, a miserably small sum for a Subdivision like this. The correspondent regrets that his means do not enable him to liberally help the suffering people who come to him for relief, the Tangail Famine

committee having paid him only Rs. 200. The people named below are in great distress:—

Mehur Shaikh of Fatepud:—Family of seven; Mehur has lately disappeared from his house and his family is starving.

Paher Shaikh of Hukaya:—One of his children has died from starvation.

Fajerali Shaikh of Deldha:—Family of nine—debt Rs. 70.

Banijya Shaikh:—Family of seven—debt Rs. 80.

Jinitulla, Darbesh, Sadhu and Mani Shaikh of Nasingpur:—In great distress.

Ujir Mirdha, Ali Mandul, Munshi Sarkar, Tarip Shaikh, Ishup Shaikh, Rupjan and Jaharbi, of Hukra:—Their condition pitiable.

Respectable middle classes also are in distress. Some of the families have been reduced to starvation. They cannot publicly beg for alms. They are, however, in urgent need of relief.

Hazaribagh.—Great distress prevails in Hazaribagh, in the Sonthal Parganas district. Rice is selling at seven or eight seers per rupee.

51. The *Bangavasi* of the 22nd May does not approve of Mr. Bourdillon's proposal regarding the utilisation of the Famine Charitable Relief Fund. An application for loan must be accompanied by a bond and a security.

But the poor raiyats, totally ruined as they have been by the famine, have nothing to give in security. If they succeed in getting loans by keeping their skeletons as a security, they will spend the money in assuaging their hunger. They will not be able to repay their loans with interest. The donors to the Famine Fund made their contributions, with the view of relieving the distress of the people and not of benefiting the Government. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* is agitating the question. But what will agitation avail in a country whose leading men and patriots are too far engrossed in their own occupations or in the enjoyment of luxury, to care a farthing for the starving poor, talk by the yard but act by the inch, and do not hesitate to support Englishmen through thick and thin, simply to keep them in humour? The majority of the members of the Calcutta Committee, including two leading Natives, have accepted Mr. Bourdillon's proposal. The *Amrita Bazar Patrika* speaks of disclosing their names, but it will be far better to keep this story of shame carefully concealed.

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52. The *Dacca Gazette* of the 24th May complains of the prevalence of distress in Dacca town. The authorities however are quite indifferent; poor widows are in an exceptionally bad plight. Low-paid Government officers are also keenly feeling the pinch of scarcity and have become all the more open to corruption. Their pay should be increased, and the Government should make no further delay in relieving the distress.

DACCA GAZETTE,
May 24th, 1897.

53. The *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 25th May does not approve of Mr. Bourdillon's proposal regarding the conversion of the Famine Charitable Relief Fund into a Loan Fund. The Calcutta Committee has not done well to accept the proposal. It will be improper, and most likely illegal to spend the Fund in any other way than granting gratuitous relief to distressed persons. The Advocate-General should be consulted as to whether Mr. Bourdillon's proposal is a lawful one.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 25th, 1897.

VI.—MISCELLANEOUS.

54. The *Basumati* of the 29th April writes as follows:—
The *Englishman* on the *Basumati*. Our cartoon on the hill exodus has offended the *Englishman*. The pictures of the Europeans in the cartoon have increased the wrath of our contemporary, and he has abused us, without correctly reading our motive. After slashingly criticising our cartoon, the *Englishman* proceeds to openly charge us with disaffection and disloyalty, and tries to draw down upon us the wrath of the Government. This has pained us not a little. We are living happy and contented under the benign rule of Sir Alexander Mackenzie, than whom there is not a more sincere

BASUMATI,
April 29th, 1897.

friend and well-wisher of the Bengalis. He knows the Bengalis well enough, and the Bengalis know him quite as well. Where is there the occasion for discontent or disaffection? In the eye of the Hindu the Sovereign is not only a ruler but protector. He is as father unto his subjects. The *Basumat* is not a rebel, but a loyal subject of the English Government.

The Indians can have no interest in rebelling against the British Government. The English nation are well known for their impartial administration. The Indians are not fools that they will even wish to see the overthrow of a Government which has given them peace and security, contentment and education, while there is every chance of its overthrow being followed by a less benign and merciful rule.

SARACHAR,
May 19th, 1897.

55. The *Sahachar* of the 19th May has the following:—

Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

It is a misfortune of Bengal that her kind, friendly and all protecting Lieutenant-Governor should fall ill in these dark days. We are fatalists, and it is our belief that it is owing solely to our ill luck that we are going to be deprived, at such a crisis, of care and protection of a Ruler like Sir Alexander Mackenzie. We heartily pray to God to restore Sir Alexander to health and vigour so that he may soon return to the scene of his work. May God grant long life to Sir Alexander!

The appointment of an able and good man like Mr. Stevens of the Board of Revenue, as officiating Lieutenant-Governor, will be the appointment of the right man in the right place.

MURSHIDABAD
HITAISHI,
May 19th, 1897.

56. The *Murshidabad Hitaishi* of the 19th May has the following:—

Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

We heartily pray that Sir Alexander Mackenzie may soon return to this Province in sound health. But so unfortunate are we that our best friends often do not return when they once go home on leave, while he who was anxious to abolish the jury system and regarded the people of this country as an inferior race, returned even before the expiry of his leave. We are therefore afraid that Sir Alexander may not return to this hot country.

Though all our expectations from Sir Alexander Mackenzie have not been realized, we have received from him favours and assurances such as we do not receive from many. His efforts to relieve famine and water scarcity prove him to be a man with a heart, and his impartial attitude towards Hindus and Muslims, proves the breadth of his views. His predecessor sowed the seeds of ill-feeling between the two peoples by unduly favouring the latter. Sir Alexander is anxious to promote high education and has entitled himself to the lasting gratitude of the Bengalis, by protesting against the proposal to enhance the land-revenue. We are sorry for Sir Alexander's quarrel with the Calcutta Municipality, and we have not found him quite so independent in administrative matters as we expected. But what we have received from him is not small. We, however, want to see in Sir Alexander Mackenzie a perfect image of the exemplary ruler who has revived the North-Western Provinces by his fostering care. We heartily pray that Sir Alexander may govern us like a father when he returns.

SANJAY,
May 21st, 1897.

57. The *Sanjay* of the 21st May is sorry that Sir Alexander Mackenzie should leave Bengal at such a crisis, and heartily prays to God that he may soon resume the duties of his office in sound health.

Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

HITAVADI,
May 21st, 1897.

58. The *Hitavadi* of the 21st May has the following:—

The *Indian Daily News* on sedition in Bengali literature.

The conduct of the *Indian Daily News* reminds us of the foolish woman in the story, who, on being told that her ears had been carried off by a crow, ran after the bird without first satisfying herself whether or no what people told her was true. The Editor of the *Indian Daily News* does not probably know a word of Bengali and yet on the mere strength of somebody's unverified and uncorroborated information, he has published a long article charging Babus Rabindranath Tagore, Chandicharan Sen and Baradakanta Sen Gupta, with publishing seditious books. One of these authors, Babu Baradakanta Sen Gupta, has sent to us two of his books, viz., "Hira Bai" and "Hemprabha," to which exceptions have been taken, and we must say that we have, by the closest scrutiny, failed to discover any trace of sedition in them. We have

already said that a man cannot be called seditious for simply calling Tantia Topi or Tikendrajit a patriot.

The *Indian Daily News* may set his heart at rest; his sweet repose will never be disturbed by Bengali guns. If the English were now to declare their intention of leaving India, the Indians would simply fall at their feet in order to exhort them to stay. Can any Bengali then preach sedition against the English? We are friends and loyal subjects of the English. That we point out the faults of the English Government is not because we wish its subversion, but because we wish its permanence. The loyal Bengalis will never be guilty of such a rebellious attitude as Anglo-Indians showed during the Ilbert Bill agitation.

59. The *Bangavasi* of the 22nd May has the following on the cow-killing question in India:—

The cow-killing question in India.

According to the Hindu *Sastras*, all the Hindus of the village in which a cow has been killed must fast for three days. The modern Hindus, however, do not strictly obey this injunction. It is, indeed, impossible to strictly obey this injunction in these days. Hindus must, therefore, learn to forgive and forbear. Cows are slaughtered for the European Army in India. Beef is hawked about in the streets of Calcutta and Babus daily see the beef stalls in the Municipal market. They do not keenly feel the evil, they do not resort to force to put it down, they do not perform *prayaschitta* for witnessing this unholy spectacle. If you have learnt to forbear, you must put up with the evil, why do you quarrel over the matter with the Musalmans and bring about a disturbance of the public peace? Europeans are beef-eaters as well as Musalmans. You have not the courage to quarrel with the former because they are your rulers. You quarrel with the latter because they are *not* your rulers. This quarrel of the Hindus with the Musalmans smells something like high handedness on the part of the former.

In this hot country beef-eating cannot suit the Musalmans, and they eat beef out of spite against the Hindus. We beseech both Hindus and Musalmans to forgive and forbear. We beseech the Musalmans not to eat what is in a manner prohibited in the Koran, and which was prohibited by Moghul Emperors, like Akbar and Shah Jahan. The Musalman eats beef to allay his hunger. The Hindu prohibits cow-killing out of a pious motive. Which is the more important, the soul or the belly, food or religion? Let the Musalmans stop cow-killing from a sense of religious toleration.

60. The same paper observes that there is a marble statue of the Queen-Empress in the Calcutta Museum and another statue is not wanted. The writer continues:—

The Diamond Jubilee Commemoration and Indian loyalty.

Why have you gone mad over the erection of a statue, marble or bronze? Do something for the people, something which was never done, and which being done will benefit the poor Indian people and deepen the impression of the Queen's memory in their hearts! Do something to enshrine her memory in the Indian heart and make her an object of worship in every Indian home!

Do you mean by erecting a statue to teach the Hindu what loyalty is? Even in this year of famine and plague, when thousands are writhing under the excruciating pain of hunger and disease, the Indian, forgetting his pain and misery for the time, is preparing to worship his beloved Empress. The hungry Indian has gladly set apart half of his small morsel of food to meet the expenses of a right royal celebration of the Diamond Jubilee. Is there any other nation on the earth who can set an example of greater loyalty to the Indian or come anywhere near him in this respect? The Indian's loyalty is as deep and vast as the ocean. It is incomparable and unrivalled in the world.

61. After Bengali-hating Sir Charles Elliott, observes the *Sanjivani* of the 22nd May, the Bengalis had the good fortune to get the Bengali-loving Sir Alexander Mackenzie

Sir Alexander Mackenzie.

for their ruler. It is a great regret that owing to ill health, the Lieutenant-Governor is going home for six months. Mr. Stevens will officiate for him. Mr. Stevens sympathises with the Bengalis and the separation from Sir Alexander Mackenzie will be bearable only because Mr. Stevens will be his *locum tenens*. The *Indian Daily News* says that Sir Alexander will most likely

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be accommodated with a post in the India Council and will not return. This is bad news indeed for the Bengalis whose only consolation, if Sir Alexander retires so soon, will be that even in the India Council he will consult their interests and try to promote their welfare.

DAINIK-O-SAMACHAR
CHANDRIKA,
May 23rd, 1897.

62. In its comments on the Bengal Tenancy Bill, observes the *Dainik-o-Samachar Chandrika* of the 23rd May, the *Pioneer* unwarrantably attacks Mr. Justice Chandra Madhav Ghose of the Calcutta High Court. The *Pioneer's*

line of argument is as follows:—There was a riot in Mr. Justice Ghose's zamindari. It must therefore have been at his instigation. The new Bengal Tenancy Bill proposes to severely deal with all such agrarian riots, and that is the reason why Mr. Justice Ghose has expressed an unfavourable opinion on the Bill. And because Mr. Justice Ghosh is opposed to the Bill, all other Judges are unfavourably disposed towards it. This is reasoning *par excellence*. It requires a good deal of moral recklessness on the part of a writer thus to unreasonably full foul of a gentleman and question his honesty and sense of justice. If this is not contempt of Court, nothing is. But the *Pioneer* has an old grudge against the Calcutta High Court. Captain Hearsay is dead, Sir Comer Petheram has retired, but the *Pioneer* has not yet forgotten the fine and the damage it was sentenced to pay. But its spite will avail nothing against the High Court Judges. It will only rankle in its own mind and thereby torment it.

ASSAM PAPERS.

SILCHAR,
May 15th, 1897.

63. The *Silchar* of the 15th May complains that, since the transfer of Babu Nriyagopal Chatterji, Sadar Munsif of Cachar, the Cachar public has been put to great inconvenience. Contested suits have practically ceased to be decided. These suits are postponed from day to day, the final decision never coming off. Parties are compelled to dance attendance in the Court, with their witnesses, and if they fail their suits are decided *ex parte*.

The transfer of Nriyagopal Babu has also stopped the filing and settlement of Small Cause Court suits, as there is at present no Munsif in the town with Small Cause Court powers. Suits for small amounts have consequently to be filed in a Munsif's Court under all the disadvantages and uncertainties of law.

It has not been advisable to give a Munsif's powers to Mr. Ainley. He has been raised to be a Magistrate from a Police Inspector, and he is not qualified to try Civil suits.

Silchar suffers from a paucity of Magistrates. Mr. Graham is a probationer and good for nothing. Mr. Ainley is heavily burdened with the Treasury and the Jail. The Deputy Commissioner is chiefly occupied with Civil suits, and it is not to be expected that the Extra Assistant Commissioner, Babu Jagat Chandra Das, will cope with the heavy pressure of work, both Civil and Criminal. The best course to remove the inconvenience of the public is to transfer Mr. Graham and bring an experienced Extra Assistant Commissioner in his place. Sylhet and not Cachar is the best place for a probationer.

SILCHAR.

64. The same paper complains of water scarcity in the Cachar district, leading to an outbreak of epidemics, and a rise in prices of food-grains. The Deputy Commissioner should, without delay, make provision for water-supply to the *basti* people. Both the District and the Local Boards are indifferent. The majority of the members of the Local Board are tea-planters, who are not mindful of the interests of the Cachar public. Most of the native members are mere figure-heads, Babus Haricharan Das and Kaminikumar Chander being the only native members who have any independence and ability. It is to be hoped that the Deputy Commissioner will take immediate steps to remove the prevailing water scarcity.

65. The same paper observes that effect should not be given to the proposal of connecting the Silchar drains with the Bara river without careful consideration and mature deliberation. In 1893 Mr. Herald, the then Deputy Commissioner of Cachar, changed the course of the Silchar drains, thereby bringing about the

overflowing of several places in the town. The Municipality improved this state of things, and the existing system should not be lightly interfered with. As the new drains are proposed to be made unusually deep, they will become a source of danger in a thickly populated town. Moreover, if they are connected with the river, river-water will enter into the town and overflow it.

66. The same paper complains that the impressing of *begar* labour is in full swing in Silchar town and it is strange that the Chief Commissioner refused to believe that

Begar labour in Assam.

labourers could be freely impressed by the police in the heart of the town. The coolies in the bazâr, who load and unload trading boats and crafts, are especially the victims of the Silchar police.

SILCHAR,
May 15th, 1897.

67. The same paper complains that the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, passed by the late Chief Commissioner, is pressing very hard upon the Assam people.

The land question in Assam.

A rule issued under this Regulation has proved a source of grinding oppression. Formerly waste-lands in Assam could be rented at a very favourable rate, but the tea-planters and the Forest Department, having monopolised the greater portion of the waste-lands, there has been less land than there is a demand for. Taking advantage of this circumstance, the late Chief Commissioner ruled that the rent of these waste-lands should be paid at *mûra* rates. This has enhanced the rent of waste-lands sevenfold—a rate of rent, which is sure to be permanently fixed at the next settlement.

SILCHAR.

68. The same paper complains that the cooly nuisance in Cachar shows no signs of abatement. The tea-garden coolies

The cooly nuisance in Cachar.

work harder than common labourers, but are paid much lower wages. Not only is the rate of their wages low, but they do not get full wages even at this low rate, the lion's share of their wages being misappropriated by the tea-garden clerks and *sardars*. Moreover, if a cooly plucks one *maund* and a quarter of tea leaves, only one *maund* is written down to his credit. In this way a large amount of surplus labour is shown in the tea-garden books.

SILCHAR.

One is surprised to learn that there are Managers of tea-gardens who turn out disabled coolies and force them to beg in the town. The Deputy Commissioner lately warned one of these Managers and told him that he would be severely dealt with if he was found doing the same thing again. The writer begs to bring to the Deputy Commissioner's notice that the Manager in question has not given up the practice so strongly condemned, and the cooly nuisance has not abated. In a small town like Silchar there are no less than fifty or sixty cooly beggars, who say that diseased and infirm coolies are not taken care of in the gardens and would die of starvation if they lived there. All Managers of tea-gardens should, however, follow the example of Babu Baikuntha Chandra Gupta, who has made ample provisions for the treatment of old and infirm coolies. A good treatment of coolies is in the long run profitable to owners of tea-gardens, as it is an inducement to coolies to stick to the gardens, and does away with the necessity of importing new coolies at an enormous cost.

It is certainly a matter of congratulation that the writer's previous article on the subject (see R. N. P., for the 8th May 1897, paragraph 73) has drawn the Deputy Commissioner's notice, and he has made up his mind to establish a poor house in the town at the cost of the tea-gardens. The sooner this proposal is carried into effect, the better for the public and the coolies.

CHUNDER NATH BOSE,

Bengali Translator.

BENGALI TRANSLATOR'S OFFICE,
The 29th May 1897.

